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LETTER DATED 5 MAY 1995 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BURUNDI TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

As you will doubtless have learned, the Second Session of the Central Organ of the Mechanism of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) for the Prevention, Management and Resolution of Conflicts in Africa took place at Tunis (Republic of Tunisia) on 20 April 1995.

Organized at the initiative of His Excellency Mr. Zine El Abidine BEN ALI, current Chairman of OAU, the meeting was held at the summit level, with the participation, in addition to the Head of State of Tunisia, of Presidents Sylvestre NTIBANTUNGANYA (Burundi), Mobutu SESE SEKO (Zaire), Idriss DEBY (Chad), Henri Konan BEDIE (Côte d'Ivoire) and Meles ZENAWI (Ethiopia). The First Vice-President of South Africa, Thabo MBEKI, and Ministers from Benin, Mauritius, Nigeria, Tanzania and Egypt also took part.

Please find attached an excerpt from the report of the session, concerning Burundi. I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Tharcisse NTAKIBIRORA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Report of the Second Regular Session of the Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism for the Prevention, Management and Resolution of Conflicts in Africa, held at the level of Heads of State and Government

20 April 1995

Tunis, Tunisia

Part relating to Burundi

Burundi

14. The Central Organ noted with appreciation the report of the ministerial delegation composed of the Secretary General, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of South Africa and Mauritius, the Tunisian Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt, which undertook a mission to Burundi on 12 April 1995. It also noted the statement by H.E. Mr. Sylvestre NTIBANTUNGANYA on the current situation in his country.

15. It expressed deep concern at the resurgence of political and institutional crises in the country, more particularly the recent outbreak of violence, political assassinations and acts of ethnic cleansing in certain parts of the country.

16. It welcomed the recent efforts made by the President and the Prime Minister, as well as by the other political leaders who have decided to work within the framework of the Convention of Government of 10 September 1994, and their determination to make Burundi public opinion aware of the need to put an end to the violence and promote genuine national reconciliation in the country.

17. It reiterated its firm support for the Convention of Government and appealed to all political and other forces, particularly the military and security forces in the country to work to ensure the full implementation of the Convention in order to restore and strengthen peace and security in Burundi.

18. It vigorously condemned the continuing militarization of Burundi society which has led the proliferation of militias in the country. It appealed for regional action to deal with the instability and insecurity caused by the introduction of weapons into Burundi and for concerted international action to help isolate and neutralize the extremists and disarm and immediately dismantle the militias and armed gangs involved in the Burundi crisis. It also called for an end to the culture and tradition of impunity in the region.

19. The Central Organ also reaffirmed its support for the commitments made at the Bujumbura Conference on refugees and displaced persons in the Great Lakes region and urged all parties concerned to ensure their immediate fulfilment. It emphasized the urgent need for the international community to increase humanitarian assistance and every other form of assistance to countries of asylum and displaced persons.

20. Concerning the OAU Observer Mission in Burundi (MIOB), the Central Organ welcomed the important role played by the Mission and stressed the need to maintain it so that it can help to restore trust and facilitate the national reconciliation process in Burundi. To that end, the Central Organ decided to extend the Mission's mandate for a further three-month period when its current mandate expires on 17 June 1995 and to increase its military component from 47 to 67 officers. It also requested the Secretary General to take the necessary steps to strengthen the Mission's civilian component. It further instructed the Ministers/Ambassadors of the Central Organ to take the appropriate steps when the mandate extended to September 1995 comes to an end.

21. The Central Organ emphasized the crucial role that neighbouring countries can play in establishing a lasting peace in Burundi. It also appealed to all the African States to give a practical demonstration of their concern at the situation in Burundi by sending missions regularly to that country, and also noted the decision by the ministerial delegation to undertake a follow-up mission to the country in late May 1995 to promote the cause of peace and national reconciliation. It then urged the States members of OAU and the international community as a whole to encourage and support the forces of moderation in Burundi and to do everything possible to isolate and neutralize the extremists.

22. The Central Organ emphasized the importance for OAU of being fully involved in any action that the United Nations Security Council might take concerning the situation in Burundi.